

Kannadiga's role in Goa's liberation

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When Goa was liberated from the grip of Portuguese colonialists, many kannadigas took a very active part in the Goa Vimochana Sahayaka Samiti. The Satyagrahis had gathered at the Portuguese border determined for struggle and face enemies bullets, when Nehru ordered Indian armed Force to March into Goa on Dec. 18, 1961. Within 26 hours the Portuguese surrendered

Goa was conquered for Portugal by Alfonso de Albuquerque on November 25th 1510. The Portuguese were the first to come and last to go from India. Their empire in India which went through many vicissitude lasted for 450 years. It was liberated from Portuguese domination in 1961. Goa an area of about 3702 sq km attracted the attention of the Portuguese for its geographical importance. Albuquerque had conceived the idea of turning the vast Indian Ocean into a more nostrum of the Portuguese by controlling the key points of Malacca, Harmez and Aden, the gateways to the Pacific, the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea, respectively.

The Indian National Movement was started in the second half of the 19th century to liberate India from European rule. Its aim was fulfilled in 1947. However, the Portuguese continued their rule in Goa. The people of Goa began to resist Portuguese domination as early as 1787. But it was nipped in the bud successfully by the Portuguese Government.

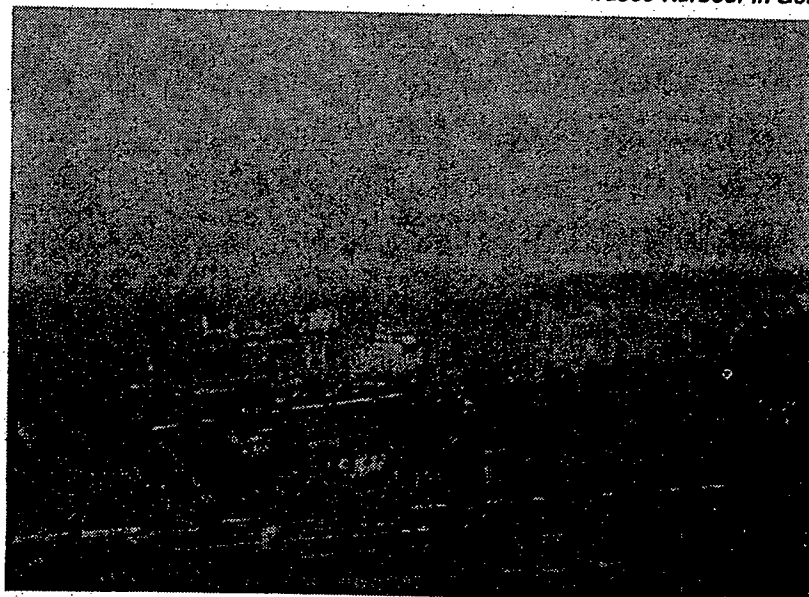
Though it continued even after that it was only after 1947 that it began to take a concrete shape. After gaining independence the Government of India and the people decided to help to free Goa from Portuguese rule.

Strong Opposition

The then Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru was optimistic in solving this problem by peaceful means. But the Portuguese Government did not allow him to settle the problem amicably. Having taken a dislike towards India's

involvement the Portuguese Government made reckless allegations and unrestrained abuses towards India. The main purpose was to create an opinion against India by pointing 'as aggressive, militarist and anti-Christian'. Besides this they also made reference covering Goa in its scope at NATO which was a defence organisation of certain countries of Atlantic region. Regretting this attitude of the Portuguese Government Nehru expressed it in his speech during Foreign Affairs Debate in Lok Sabha on September 29th

Vasco Harbour in Goa



Liberation

1954. Consequently the Portuguese settlements in India aroused much attention in both the houses of Parliament. So the nation decided to take firm action against foreign rule. Incidentally in Goa the opposition and resistance to foreign rule had gathered momentum.

When the internal revolts were suppressed, the Goans came to Bombay and met leading leaders of the time, like Madhu Dandavate and others. They decided to form a Goa Vimochana Sahayaka Samithi.

help the liberation movement. This Committee announced that it would carry out a march in Goa

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of every nook and corner of the country made up their mind to join in the Struggle for Goa and Coas. In the liberation movement several Kannadigas also took active part. An All Party Goa Liberation Aid Committee in Mysore was formed and elaborate arrangements were made to send volunteers from Bangalore. On 8th August 1955 a public meeting was held at Chickalabagh in which leaders like R.Muniswamaiah, N.L. Upadhyaya, K.S. Varadaraj, K.Kannan and S.Suryanarayan



Dounapaul an Enchanting Beach of Goa

Thus an all Party Goa Liberation Aid Committee came into existence in June 1954. There were other non-Goan political parties too. Later Maharashtra and Gujarati Praja Socialist Party which came forward to

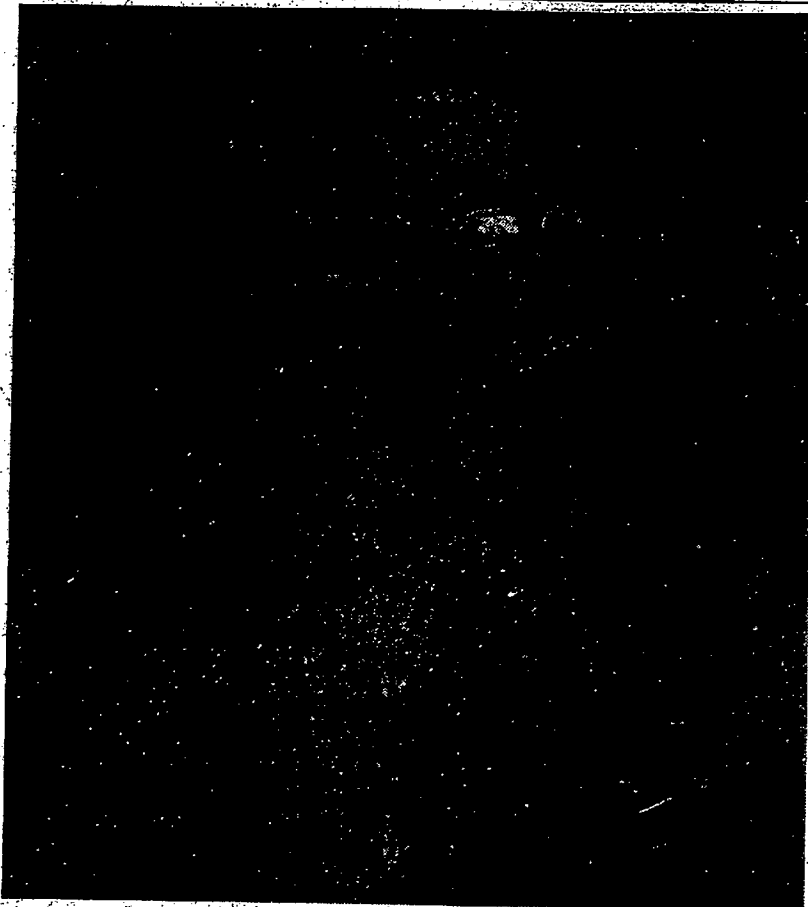
on 15th August 1955, as Satyagrahis campaign against Portuguese.

War of Liberation

As a result of this announcement patriotic citizens

Rao addressed the meeting.

On 9th August a first batch led by V.M. Chandrashekhar left for Belgaum. The other members were Achuta Rao, R.Venkataswamy



S.M. Tadasadamath a Goa liberation fighter from Dharwad

Y.C.Nanjundaiah, Arjunadeva, Narasimhaiah, Kantaraj, L.G.K. Murthy, Ramakrishna, R.Raju, R.Rangaiah Shetty, R.Ramachandra Rao and Chanbasappa, K.M.Muniappa, Mastan Sab, S.Krishnamurthy, Paul Sundaram, R.Ekambaram, S.G.Prakash, Hemantharaj, Manikyam and K.Sanjeeva Rao on that evening Bangalore City Railway Station resounded to cries of slogans condemning the repressive measures of the Portuguese in Goa.

A Student batch led by V.Muthukumar the then General Secretary of the Mysore Central Students Federation left KGF on 11th August 1955 to Belgaum. The other five students were

R.Ranganathan, J.Louis Selvas, A.Mohanraj, S.Joseph and D.Edward Lawrence). A second batch led by G.Ramareddy left for Belgaum on 11th August (other members of this batch were B.Narasimhaiah, B.Viswanatha, Shivanna, Narayanappa, Kittalaiah, Channabasappa, Nagaraj Shetty and Ganapathy). Thus several volunteers left for Belgaum to enter Goa on 15th August.

From Dharwad

But the *Satyagrahis* from North Karnataka decided to enter Goa from Karwar district. In Dharwad District Hubli was the centre of this movement. On 8th August 1955 All Party Goa

Liberation Aid Committee meeting was held under the presidentship of S.R.Bommai to decide about their future action. This meeting was also addressed by Patil Puttappa. A batch headed by S.M. Tadasadamath left Hubli to Karwar to join the earlier batch led by Channappa Wali. (The other members of the batch were A.J.Mudhol, Appa Vadadekar, Mahadevappa Muragod, Shantinath Ingale, Siddappa Badiger, Devendra Badiger. Later on V.R.Hallikeri, Ramanna Kapse and N.P.Laxmeshwara also joined the movement).

In Karwar District the role played by Peter Alva, S.G.Bhat is highly commendable. They travelled throughout Karwar District and encouraged the people to participate in the movement. A lone woman named Jaijubai from Baad of Karwar took active part, while she was in Goa she was caught by the Negro Policeman and injured both physically and mentally. A hundred members team led by Marutheswara Rawal from Kittur marched to Haliyal. Besides these districts *Satyagrahis* from Bijapur, Belgaum, Raichur also participated in this movement.

From South Kanara a team led by Hande and Upendra Naik participated in this movement.

March into Goa

Thus by 14th August *Satyagrahis* from all over Karnataka and India waited all along the Goa border for mass entry into this small area. They had no arms and ammunitions. But the Portuguese Government under Dr. Salazar made

elaborate arrangements to suppress the movement. Portuguese Government deployed Negro Policemen and soldiers to look after the innocent *Satyagrahis*. Only foreign Journalists and Photographers were permitted to watch this movement. *Satyagrahis* started shouting slogans like "Goa Hindustan Ka Hai, Nahi Kisi Bap Ka, Goa Jayenge Lati Goli Kayenge".

On 15th August unarmed volunteers of India entered Goa from Cancona, Banda, Saroli and Dicholi. On that day Portuguese Govt. declared Martial Law. Machine guns sealed off the border area.

Police Open fire

Narrating their experiences *Satyagrahis* of Mysore batch like C. Krishnamurthy and Arjundeva said that few of them received minor injuries and took treatment in Victoria Hospital after their return to Bangalore. But the *Satyagrahis* who entered from Cancona received severe blows and were beaten up. Vasu Ganoji received a blow on his forehead and fell unconscious there only, however he was brought to Karwar. S.M. Tadasadamath was hit by police on his left arm, and took treatment in Karwar Govt. Hospital along with Jaljubai a woman *Satyagrahi*. At Cancona they were arrested and imprisoned in a small area. Policemen spat at them when they asked food and water. At some places in Northern Goa soldiers opened fire in which 30 men were killed. Two of them were Hanumanthappa Thegunt and Anandayya from Gadag and

Gajendragad of Dharwad District respectively.

But the most unfortunate thing was that Portuguese soldiers used "Dum Dum" bullets which were banned in Geneva Convention. On this historic day Nehru spoke from the ramparts

When the internal revolts were suppressed, the Goans came to Bombay and met leading leaders of the time, like Madhu Dandavate and others. They decided to form a Goa Vimochana Sahayaka Samithi. Thus an all Party Goa Liberation Aid Committee came into existence in June 1954. There were other non-Goan political parties too. Later Maharashtra and Gujarati Praja Socialist Party which came forward to help the liberation movement

of the Red Fort thus "My mind and heart were full of thoughts for those people on the Goa border. My mind was full of what had happened and what might happen to our people doing a brave act facing a danger".

However, Nehru exhibited his patience and tolerance for 14 years. He did not want the Goan issue to develop into a cold war between big powers. Rejecting Dange's suggestion of opening a "Second Front" in Goa against Portuguese, Nehru said that Portuguese had sought aid from the NATO and some big powers and if in such a situation "we

light small fire at one place we cannot say what area it will engulf".

However pressure was mounting on Nehru from several quarters calling for immediate police action. The Committee of African Organisation in London sent a cable to Nehru saying that "Africa was with him and that he should march into Goa with all his might to liberate Goa. Nehru met John F. Kennedy at Washington. His Presidentship brought a new foreign policy towards India. Nehru also met Marshall Tito of Yugoslavia. Soviet Leader Brezhnev also assured his country's full support. Having obtained a favourable world wide opinion knowing well that it was a just cause, Nehru ordered Indian Armed Forces to march ahead.

Liberation achieved

Thus accordingly Indian Armed Forces marched into Goa, shortly after midnight on Monday the 18th December 1961. Thus the last step was taken to blow up colonialism in the soft light of the half moon with stars twinkling in the clear night sky. The Indian forces were led by Major General Candeth and Lt. General J.N. Chaudhari, Rear Admiral B.S. Soman and Air Marshall Pinto. All this operation was over within 26 hours and unconditional surrender documents were signed at Vasco-da-Gama by the Portuguese Governor General Manuel Antonio Vassale de Silva. Thus Goa was liberated on 19th December 1961.

